

Lake Hood & Anchorage General Aviation Airport Master Plan

Meeting: Technical Advisory Meeting #1

Date: 4/7/2004

Location: LakeAire Complex, Lake Hood, Anchorage AK.

Purpose: On April 7, 2004 a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting was held in Anchorage to present and solicit information about the Lake Hood and ANC General Aviation Airport Master.

Participants:

Airport Representatives: Diana Rigg, of Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (ANC) (ADOT&PF) Project Manager; Corky Caldwell, Deputy Director (ANC); Kip Knudsen, ADOT&PF Deputy Commissioner; John Parrott, ADOT&PF ANC Operations; Andy Hutzell, Lake Hood Manager; and Bill Chord, ANC Planning.

Consultant Team: Nicole McCullough, Sara Funk, Teresa Fredrickson, ASCG Incorporated; Robert Varani, ASRC Aerospace; and Mike Hines, HNTB Corporation attended the meeting along with 16 members of the TAC. Other members of the ASCG team not present included Frank Rast of R&M Consultants and Dave Hanson from ARKTOS.

TAC Committee Members:

Carl Siebe	Alaska Aviation Safety Foundation/ADOT&PF Statewide Aviation
John Lovett	Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
Dick Armstrong	ACE Hangars/Fuels
Will Walker	Spenard Community Council
Cathy Gleason	Turnagain Community Council
Bill Hatley	Fly North
John Pletcher	Retired
Gene Zerkel	Alaska Aircraft Sales
Steve Fishback	ECI/Hyer
Patrick Witherell	Sandlake Community Council
Dana Pruhs	South Airpark
Tom George	Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA)
John Pratt	Seaplane Pilots Association
Dee Hanson	AOPA LHD/Z41
Felix Maguire	Alaska Airmen's Association/AACC/NEAA
Scott Christy	Lake Hood Pilots Association
Tom Bullard	FAA Tower
Jack Barber	Alaska Air Taxi
Stephen Routh	AHI

Invited But Not in Attendance:

Matt Ross	Signatory Airlines
Karen Casanovas	Alaska Air Carriers Assoc
Brent Cole	AOPA
Ron Smith	Lake Hood Harbor
James Seely	Lake Hood Pilots Association

The meeting began around 4:45 p.m. Copies of the agenda, draft schedule, draft issues, draft goals and objectives, the facilities map, and noise tips were provided.

Meeting Summary:

Introductions. Diana Rigg introduced the ADOT&PF and the ASCG Incorporated team members and welcomed the TAC participants. Kip Knudsen emphasized that the planning effort will cover the entire general aviation complex at Lake Hood and Anchorage International Airport including all parking and paved areas. Other items that the planning effort should examine include the adequacy or needs for general aviation transient facilities, such as flight planning needs, passenger waiting and pickup, transportation to other airport or city facilities, such as rental cars, restroom facilities, etc. Corky Caldwell expressed ANC's continued commitment to the general aviation community. Lake Hood has not had a stand alone airport master plan. The last Airport Master Plan that addressed Lake Hood was completed in 1996. John Lovett explained that FAA funding supports the master planning work and he looks forward to working with the TAC members.

Planning Process Overview. Diana provided a brief review of the airport master planning process, which includes:

- 1) Inventory of the Existing Facilities
- 2) Demand Forecast – Trend Line Analysis
- 3) Facility Requirements
- 4) Alternatives Analysis – Environmental, Socioeconomic, etc.
- 5) Preferred Alternative
- 6) Financial Plan

Diana encouraged TAC members to provide feedback, comments, and input at any time. TAC members can contact her personally via telephone, e-mail, fax, or correspondence. It is hoped that the TAC will act as a working committee to help develop the master plan for Lake Hood and ANC. It is anticipated that the airport master plan will be completed approximately within 18 months. Six TAC meetings are initially planned. Three workshops focusing on “perfect world” circumstances, Lake Spenard operations, and the western boundary are planned. The Lake Hood and ANC Airport Layout Plans shows the furthest west the boundary currently goes is to Postmark Drive.

This boundary is not fixed, but was simply developed and shown on the Airport Layout Plans to meet FAA's funding requirements. John Lovett explained that because Lake Hood has scheduled service and more than 10,000 passenger enplanements, the facilities received \$1 million in federal funds. John Lovett further stated that Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds are targeted for capital improvements not operational needs. AIP eligible projects include, lighting, nav aids, power to tiedowns, and other utilities directly related to aviation infrastructure, such as runways, taxiways, and aprons. Kip Knudsen stated that the commercial carriers¹ have historically supported general aviation at both Anchorage and Fairbanks International Airports. When asked if the western boundary workshop should be held at the beginning or end of the master planning process, the TAC members agreed that the boundary workshop should be held at the end, after a preferred alternative for airport development has been selected.

Two public meetings are scheduled.

¹ The Airport (ANC, LHD, and Z41) capital improvement program must be accepted by the signatory airlines, which are those that negotiate a multi-year airline operating agreement with the International Airport System (Anchorage and Fairbanks).

Personal contact information for TAC members will not be released to the public at this time.

Draft Issues. Nicole McCullough and Sara Funk discussed the initial draft issues and the draft goals and objectives. A plan to prioritize issues was dropped due to time constraints and the need TAC members expressed to spend more time understanding the issues. Goals and objectives were not discussed, but TAC members were asked to read the handout on goals and provide comments; goals will be addressed at the next TAC meeting.

Most of the issues that were presented were identified at a public meeting held by the ADOT&PF in the summer of 2003. Sara reviewed the issues, which included:

- Western Boundary for Lake Hood Complex
- Airspace
- Floatplane Parking Capacity
- Additional Lake Access
- Public Involvement Needed
- Preserve Taxiway Victor
- Demand Forecast
- Neighborhood Noise
- More Hangars (Individual and Group) Needed
- Public Recreational Area at Lake Spenard
- Paved or Gravel
- Need for More Wheeled Tiedowns and Public Facilities
- Financial Plan
- Capital Improvements
- Technical Advisory Committee
- South Air Park
- General Aviation Space Parking
- Vehicle Parking
- Analyze Security Issues for General Aviation
- Analyze Part 91/135 Operations
- Perform Cadastral Survey of Lots
- Master Plan Timeframe
- Instrumentation
- Access to Lake Hood Complex
- Analyze General Aviation as a whole at ANC and LHD
- Establish N/S Waterlane at Lake Spenard
- Oil/Trash Disposal Facility

TAC members made the following comments on the issues.

- **Western Boundary for Lake Hood Complex.** The issue was addressed in the introductory part of the meeting. One TAC member said the boundary is contentious because general aviation users feel they are being “pushed off” the Airport by commercial aviation.
- **Airspace.** Individuals mentioned that the tower is doing a great job. An extensive airspace study was conducted about five years ago. Tom Bullard explained that the

Pilot Bulletin², which includes recent changes in the VFR route structure, will be published in the Alaska Supplement³ in the future, rather than as a separate document. Members discussed various approaches and procedures. With further pilot education, overuse of specific approaches and departures might be limited. Tom Bullard mentioned that the Little Su approach is frequently used during the summer.

- **Floatplane Parking Capacity.** An extensive waitlist for floatplane slips indicates floatplane parking capacity is insufficient to meet demand. The time on the waitlist has been reduced substantially from 18 to about five and one-half years. Andy Huetzel stated that there are about 220 individuals on the current wait list. Recently, offers for 24 slips resulted in 17 individuals accepting the slips. Approximately one-third of the individuals on the waitlist decline a slip for a variety of reasons (no floatplane, no floatplane rating). All waitlist applicants must hold at least a student license. Dee Hanson wondered how many individuals that have access to a float slip are also on the waitlist. *[After the meeting, staff at the airport researched the records which showed that 57 individuals with existing tie-downs are on the float plane wait list but records did not show how many individuals with access to float slips, but are not currently leasing, also are on the wait list].*
- Andy mentioned that he has the list on the website. Dry land storage was examined in the 1996 study. Dana Pruhs stated that reconfiguring the parking where it is less intrusive for the community may offer less congestion and impacts. Cathy Gleason stressed that increasing capacity should not be the goal. To increase capacity, more real estate would need to be developed and as a result, more aircraft noise could be anticipated. Nicole stated that the airport master plan will examine the facility requirements for Lake Hood, but a plan to increase capacity has not been determined at this time. Floatplane slip monthly fees are \$95.00 and wheeled parking is \$40.00 per month.
- **Additional Lake Access.** Two public ramps provide Lake access. The Office of Aircraft Services (OAS) also has a ramp, but it is private and pilots are only allowed to use it on a “special needs” or emergency basis as determined by the owners. The public ramp located at the north end of the lake is difficult to use when the wind is from the southeast, when it is hard to keep aircraft using the ramp from hitting adjoining aircraft. The north ramp has other problems. Dee Hanson asked about the self-ramps (individual, private ramps constructed at float slips). Andy mentioned that two individuals stopped by to inquire about self-ramps. TAC members wondered if the south pothole could be developed into a public ramp. Felix McGuire said that the Goose will bottom out at the public ramps so it must use the OAS ramp.
- **Preserve Taxiway Victor.** Taxiway Victor, which provides access to the main ANC airfield, is important to the general aviation community. The Airport is committed to preserving a connection between Lake Hood and ANC as is it essential to general aviation. Pilots have heard rumors of closing Taxiway Victor to general aviation. Corky Caldwell reassured the TAC members that the Airport realizes how

² The Anchorage Terminal Area Pilot Bulletin explains and simplifies operating procedures in the Anchorage airspace and is based on 14 CFR Part 93, Special Air Traffic Rules, Subpart D, Anchorage, Alaska Terminal Area.

³ The Alaska Supplement is an Airport/Facility Directory updated quarterly by the National Aeronautical Charting Office of the FAA.

important Taxiway Victor is to general aviation and there were no plans for closing access from Lake Hood to ANC.

- **Demand Forecast.** Cathy Gleason asked if both constrained and unconstrained demand forecasts were being developed for the airport master plan. At this time, only constrained demand forecasts are being prepared. Tom George asked if there was going to be a genuine effort to find out exactly who used the facilities, particularly transients, and when. **[After the meeting, Diana offered to coordinate with Tom and supply a brief questionnaire that he could provide to members of AOPA or other groups.]**
- **Neighborhood Noise.** Will Walker asked about the percentage of pilots (aircraft) that come across the Spenard Road, Will mentioned that he met some pilots that use a particular approach path which reduces aircraft noise. Will wondered if more pilots could be trained to limit the aircraft noise. Noise tips for pilots are not enforced; Cathy Gleason wondered about penalizing pilots that do not follow the noise tips and if any regulations could be applied. Cathy Gleason suggested an airport buffer zone, where no further aviation development would occur. The Airport will work with the Noise Office to monitor activity this summer. It must be noted that only aircraft that have a transponder can be monitored by the system.
- **More Hangars (Individual and Group).** More hangars, both individual and group are needed.
- **Public Recreational Area at Lake Spenard.** Pilots identified serious safety concerns with joggers, bicyclists, dogs, and swimmers mixing with aircraft. Joggers frequently listen to music while exercising and are not always aware of aircraft taxiing nearby. Future trail projects in the State Transportation Improvement Program were discussed. Two trails going through Lake Hood are planned in the future. Water quality at Lake Hood concerns both the community and pilots. Swimming is not allowed without a lifeguard at the Lake Spenard Park; however, this is not enforced.
- **Gravel/Paved.** The issue concerns whether or not the gravel-surfaced Lake Hood runway should be paved. TAC members asked if two parallel strips (one gravel and one paved) could be possible. This option might be considered by the master plan. Sara Funk explained that some airports use gravel for the first (landing) part of a paved runway, which is where landing on gravel is important for aircraft with big, "tundra" tires. Felix McGuire feared paving the GA strip might be used as justification for closing off GA access to the ANC airfield.
- **More Wheeled Tiedowns and Public Facilities.** Cathy Gleason was concerned about habitat values for any future development project at Lake Hood Airport. The airport master plan will address future facility requirements.
- **Financial Plan.** The Lake Hood facility improvements are subsidized by ANC funding, as mentioned previously. Maintenance and operation costs at Lake Hood exceed the revenue from Lake Hood fees and rents.
- **Capital Improvements.** Cathy Gleason asked if FAA funds could be used for environmental mitigation efforts. John Lovett responded that mitigation for needed

airport facilities could be funded by the AIP. The AIP has a set-aside portion of discretionary funds for noise mitigation, such as the insulation of residences in areas of high noise exposure⁴.

- **Technical Advisory Committee.** It was suggested that a long-standing TAC with subgroups be established. These subgroups would meet with community representatives to work on concerns such as noise, traffic patterns, and recreational uses at Lake Hood. Andy currently has a monthly meeting open to users and neighbors. This could be a starting point.
- **South Air Park.** The representative from the Sand Lake Community Council expressed concern about the future development of the South Air Park and wanted to know what land was designated for aviation activities. The South Air Park will be examined in the airport master plan.
- **General Aviation Space/Parking.** General aviation parking appears to be diminishing. Although Echo parking replaced Charlie parking, the distance to taxi to Taxiway Romeo at ANC is much longer. Some TAC members indicated a desire to reclaim Charlie parking for general aviation.
- **Vehicle Parking.** Pilots stated that privately owned vehicles frequently block access to their aircraft and the facilities.
- **Analyze Security Issues for General Aviation.** Currently, there is little security at the Lake Hood facilities. With the public access, roads, and trails, security can be difficult to enforce. AOPA has a pilot watch program.
- **Analyze Part 91/135 Operations.** No particular conflicts between private and commercial pilots/operations were identified. The question of adding a third strip (similar to Merrill Field) was discussed. It was recommended that the additional strip be examined during the alternative development phase.
- **Perform Cadastral Survey of Lots.** The lease lots and slips have never been surveyed.
- **Instrumentation.** It was asked if there was a need for an instrument approach for the waterlanes. Currently, IFR operations are not permitted into and out of LHD. Tom Bullard verified this indicating that no TERPS analysis has been done for LHD. A few air taxi pilots perform an approach to ANC, cancel their IFR flight plan and then land on the lake or strip under VFR. When visibility is down to 1 mile the pilots must request a "Special VFR" clearance to land on the lake or strip. If the weather conditions preclude "Special VFR" pilots must remain IFR and land at ANC. A need for a new GPS approach and IFR departures was briefly discussed. However, the general consensus was that IFR operations are supported adequately by access to ANC.

⁴ Residential insulation and other mitigation may be FAA-funded where noise exposure is greater than 65 DNL. DNL is an average measure of decibels of noise exposure that weights nighttime noise because it is more disruptive than daytime noise. Noise exposure modeling done for the Airport indicates there are residences near Lake Hood strip where noise exposure exceeds 65 DNL,

- **Access to Lake Hood Complex.** An idea was expressed that GA pilots living near the Lake Hood Strip might be provided direct access to the Airport via a pedestrian way, vehicular road, and/or aircraft taxiway. The east side of the Lake Hood Strip might provide an area to develop hangars. Community representatives felt that the increased noise from aviation activities and tree removal would not enhance the community.
- **Establish N/S Waterlane at Lake Spenard.** Currently, a north/south Lake Spenard waterlane is shown in the Alaska Supplement but not in the Pilot Bulletin or the ALP. Tom Bullard indicated that the FAA is in the process of removing the waterlane from the Alaskan Supplement.

Nicole asked if there were additional issues that need to be addressed. Issues discussed in further detail include:

- Snow removal
- Conflict with recreational users on the Airport
- Water quality
- Runway extension
- Wetlands
- Standing Technical Advisory Committee and Subgroups
- Pubic Viewing
- Potential Museum Location
- Airport Buffer Zone
- Vehicular Traffic Patterns

Tracking operational versus maintenance costs, augmenting ANC capacity, limiting aircraft activity during the summer to reduce noise, and enforcing noise tips were other subjects discussed. Also, Cathy Gleason inquired if this airport master plan would dovetail with the Municipal Comprehensive Plan and a West Anchorage District Plan that has not started. Diana Rigg stated that, unfortunately, the airport master planning process cannot wait until other community plans are finished. She said that the goals and objectives of the Municipal Comprehensive Plan would be examined.

TAC members were encouraged to provide comments on the draft issues and draft goals and objectives within two to three weeks. TAC members decided to hold future meetings on Tuesdays from 11:30-1:30 p.m. Diana Rigg will arrange for a larger meeting room, probably at the ADOT&PF building (upside down building) where there is plenty of free parking.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:35 p.m